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### UM mailroom receives suspicious letter; some mail delayed

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**Montana**

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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Jan. 22, 2002

**Contact:** Dan Corti, director, Environmental Health and Occupational Safety, 243-2881 or 544-1638.

### **UM MAILROOM RECEIVES SUSPICIOUS LETTER; SOME MAIL DELAYED**

**MISSOULA--**

A suspicious letter received by The University of Montana is on its way to the state epidemiological lab in Helena for biological testing. The letter was delivered to UM's mailroom on Saturday, where it sat until this morning, when mailroom employees noticed it met several criteria for suspicious mail. These criteria, widely publicized in the wake of post-Sept. 11 anthrax attacks in the eastern United States, include an incomplete address, a New York return address and postmark, excessive postage and the hand-printed words "scienceworks." The letter was addressed to the attention of "Chief Executive."

Employees immediately sealed the envelope in plastic and called UM's Office of Public Safety, which in turn notified local authorities. After officials from the Missoula city police and fire departments and the Missoula County Health Department agreed the letter posed a credible threat, it was securely wrapped and taken to the health department before transfer to the state lab in Helena. UM's mailroom, which is located in the Physical Plant, will remain sealed until testing on the letter is complete. Testing is expected to take approximately 48 hours.

The mailroom has been temporarily relocated to the east end of the Physical Plant, behind bay door No. 4. Campus Mail Services will maintain its normal pickup and delivery schedule for UM offices, but most outgoing, off-campus mail will be delayed until the mailroom is reopened

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and its postage machinery is once again available. Arrangements for critical mailings may be made with Campus Mail Services by calling 243-2272. Phones have been forwarded to the temporary location.

For more information about health-related concerns, call Dan Corti, director of Environmental Health and Occupational Safety at UM, 243-2881 or 544-1638.

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